THE MONROE LEFT

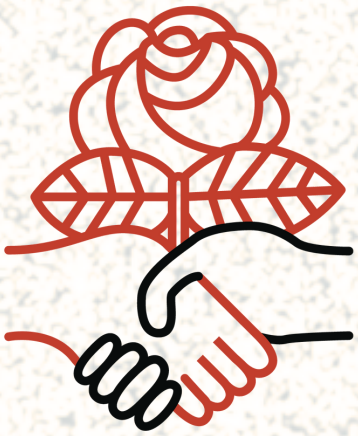
OF THE MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
YOUNG DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA

SEPTEMBER 2023
SERIES No. 1 ISSUE No. 1

INAUGURAL ISSUE

WHY THE MONROE LEFT?

The Monroe Left is a political, partisan and entirely student-driven publication from the MCC YDSA written in the hopes of sharing the art, experiences and ideas of students, alumni, faculty and staff in favor of a leftist, progressive and brighter tomorrow.



IN THIS ISSUE...

- Foreword.....04
- "What is Democratic Socialism?".....06
  by the Officers of the MCC YDSA
- "Establish Democracy. Abolish the Supreme Court."....11
  by Robin G. (he/they)
- "Debunking Transphobia: Is This All They Have?".....15
  by Chianti F. (they/them) & Elizabeth T. (she/her)
- "The Right to Death: Left to Suffer".....20
  by Jade (they/them)
- All Submissions for the MCC YDSA Logo.....24
- Credits & Discord Invite.....27

Foreword

by Elizabeth Tackitt (she/her)

IT is morning. Sun shines down on the black and tan speckled floors of the Building 12 bridge toward the Atrium, beams of God rays dancing on the dewey grass that frames the outside of the administrative block. The smell of coffee is fresh in the air. A sense of urgency is in everybody this morning, though this isn't unlike any other morning.

Rain clouds roll steadily in from the west, yet forecast in Brighton is calling for a sunny morning. Scattered showers will make for a damp, yet pleasant sojourn to the classroom. WHAM predicts a temperature average of sixty-two degrees, which might be normal for others but as of now has come as an unwelcome early chill. The citizens of Rochester brace for a traditional, blistering winter.

The shadows of the Western towers cast a dark, foreboding yet impressive visage of a castle on the morning asphalt. Said dark-gray tarmacs are being flooded with proletariat vehicles, engines clicking from recent exposure to activity. Their according students hurry inside; enforcers of parking passes patrol the perimeter of campus. Lucky students get off without a ticket.

Today, a student hurriedly rushes through these halls, carrying with them dozens of copies of this magazine. It is eight o'clock, morning at Monroe Community College, and their magazine is titled "The Monroe Left." It was conducted by the Young Democratic Socialists of America, verbiage and prose overflowing its pages. These are the majesties that they carried with them.

What is Democratic Socialism?

by the Officers of the MCC YDSA

WHY DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM?

Democratic Socialism embodies the project to give *power to the people* and overturn all systems of exploitation and oppression. Democratic Socialism is **not** a commonly understood term. In America, **socialism** is even readily used as *an antonym for democracy* in political discourse. The dichotomy driven between socialism and democracy originates in a misunderstanding, oftentimes a *deliberate misunderstanding*. Fighting for democracy and fighting for socialism has always been tightly intertwined. Figures like **Nelson Mandela**, **George Orwell**, and **Martin Luther King Jr** were all fighting the same **Democratic Socialist** front, but they are rarely acknowledged as being champions of socialism in the same breath as they are champions of democracy. *Socialism nor democracy can ever be fully realized without the other*, as they are both the project of building **freedom** and **community** in opposition to tyranny, fostered primarily through forces implemented in capitalism.

...AND WHAT IS CAPITALISM?

Democratic Socialism provides an *antidote* to our political economy, a machine called **capitalism** that must be defined before any solution can be achieved. Capitalism remains the dominant force in how almost everything happens in our society, from the food we eat to the wars we fight. Although expansive and complicated, the bedrock of this system lies in the private ownership of the means of production and the profit motive. Property and profitability give rise to the two essential socialist critiques of capitalism...

1. “Work under capitalism takes place socially while being owned privately.”

Workplaces are used and maintained by the **workers**: farmers work the farm, baristas work the coffee shop, architechs, engineers, construction workers, and city planners all come together to build skyscrapers. *Owners can work, and workers can own, but whether or not you own something has nothing to do with whether you worked for it.* **Laborless ownership** necessitates that in almost every case the worker cannot own what they make, yet has to answer to an owner who never got their hands dirty. The product of collective work being **stolen** by an absent capitalist defines the nature of all exploitation. Workers expertise will **not** be considered for workplace decisions, workers payment, nor workplace conditions. Workplace dictatorships not only *kill the creativity* in a workplace, they are **undemocratic** and **inefficient**.

2. “Decisions under capitalism are made based on what is profitable.”

“**The bottom line**” distinguishes capitalism from previous economic systems, *many of which had money but were not controlled by a profit incentive*. Economic decisions that would be more ethical, efficient, or democratic all are foregone for decisions that increase profits for the few.

Since profit **must** be endlessly reinvested to make more profit, *there will be no limit to how much capitalism expands*. The **parasitic growth of capital** intrudes upon every aspect of domestic and global life as it looks for *more resources to consume*. Following the bottom line creates **colonialism, imperialism, and environmental devastation.** Powerful nations are enticed by profits to extract *unfathomable* wealth from weaker ones. At the same time, the commodification of every last corner of the world is *destroying our environment and killing life on our earth*.

Property and profit create a small class of **economic elites** who own the labor and make the profit. Capitalists dominate the business world, but they also dominate our politics and even our culture. Good political campaigns cost millions, and to get this money any **successful politician** will do rich patrons *big favors*. The relationship representatives are meant to have with their people strains to compete with the relationship representatives have with their capitalists. *Popular demands like maternity leave and universal healthcare are betrayed* in favor of low taxes and deregulation. The equality promised by democracy proves **incompatible** with the inequality inherent in capitalism.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

Everyone will get a say in how our political economy runs, and everyone *will get a piece of what they create*. Economic decisions that affect all of us like the **production of energy**, the **management of housing**, and the **cost of healthcare** will all be determined by the **will of the people** rather than what is profitable. Even the global superpowers and international corporations that subjugate us will be overcome, but *only when workers from nations all across the world work together to fulfill our potential to be free, creative, and unified*. As socialists, we fight for reforms that make life easier under capitalism, but our goal is **real transformation**. The right to an abortion, to love who you want, the right to equal opportunities, the right to healthcare, the right to housing, the right to the world you create, every right we win empowers us to live the way we want. **Democratic Socialism is when the world runs for us, the very people who run it.**

Establish Democracy. Abolish the Supreme Court.

by Robin G. (he/they)

IN the wake of **Roe v. Wade**, the **Supreme Court** has once more demonstrated its illegitimacy. Even among liberals like Senator Whitehouse, the Supreme Court is described as *an illegitimate, "captured" institution*. However, *in these liberals' minds*, the issue is not the Supreme Court but its *exploitation* by an increasingly bold Republican party. This analysis is *accurate to an extent*. For decades, the conservative movement has created structures for selecting and influencing potential judicial nominees from the time they're in college. For instance, the Federalist Society's Leonard Leo played a deciding role in the nomination of Justices Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, and Barrett.

"...DECADES OF UNVETOABLE LAW-MAKING"

However, **this analysis fails** to answer why the conservative movement is expending *so many resources* on the Supreme Court. The answer is that the Supreme Court is **fundamentally undemocratic** and reactionary, far more than most American institutions. The nomination of a Supreme Court Justice has the potential to guarantee *decades of unvetoable law-making*. Furthermore, the Supreme Court has historically been overwhelmingly **reactionary**. In over two hundred years, only Chief Justice Warren helmed a *consistently progressive era*. This era was during the 1960s, a decade of massive social upheaval. Ultimately, the Supreme Court is an **unaccountable institution that supports conservative interests**.

“The working class must mold the law… the working class alone.”

To create a society free of exploitation and injustice, *we must replace the Supreme Court* with a **democratic alternative**. It is only by making the halls of power accessible to the working class that we enable ourselves to create that society.

In socialists’ search for **alternatives**, we must first consider who the law serves. *It is this question that molds legal systems.* Under capitalism, for instance, **the law serves the capitalist class** and its pursuit of profit. The pipeline is protected, not the earth; the right to advertise carcinogens and not our health. However, if we are to create a democratic and socialist society, this must not be the case. *The working class must mold the law*, and its institutions **must** be held accountable to the **working class alone**.

The desire to create novel legal systems by and for the working class is not new. This desire is one with a *rich history* in the socialist movement. In their **1912 Platform**, The **Socialist Party of America** advocated repealing laws by popular referendum and abolishing judicial review. Similarly, **socialist revolutions** have historically sought to make lawmaking more accessible. In **Cuba**, the revolutionary government established popular tribunals where non-lawyers, elected by their neighbors, acted as judges.

These solutions, different though they may be, *share a desire to democratize the judicial system*. Rather than allowing laws to be created by a privileged few, **the working class must entrust lawmaking to itself**.

<u>These will not create a socialist or a democratic society</u>. However, it is a **stepping-stone** in creating this society. It allows everyone, not just those with economic power, to give meaning to the laws which govern us. By dismantling reactionary institutions like the Supreme Court, *the working class will also rid capitalism of many of its defenses*. Only then, with power now in its hands, will the working class be able to **liberate itself**.

Debunking Transphobia: Is This All They Have?

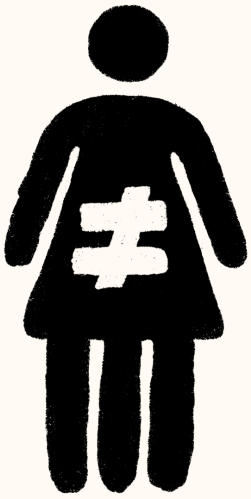
by Chianti F. (they/them)
and Elizabeth Tackitt (she/her)

As leftists, we often encounter several *illogical, untrue arguments* against the movement for gender liberation and transgender rights. Here's a few of those arguments, and our counters to said arguments. Feel free to consider them on your own before reading our responses!

"Trans people are not natural."

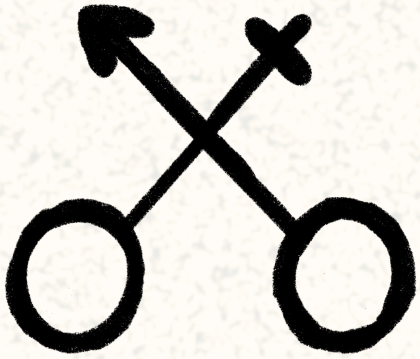
This is a textbook **naturalism fallacy**. Proving something is unnatural does not prove that it is wrong. Diseases and hurricanes are natural, life saving medicine and the roofs over our heads are unnatural. Transphobes portray trans people as unnatural in order to *invoke disgust*, rather than to appeal to rationality.

"Trans people aren't the same as their cisgender equivalents."



This is true! Trans people are not the same as cis people. Not only do trans people acknowledge this, but it's actually the reason the prefix "trans" exists: to distinguish between members of a gender who were born into that gender, and members of a gender who transitioned into that gender. Trans men, for instance, know that they are like cis men in that they are both men, but if they took testosterone later in life they may be shorter than most men. *There are plenty of cis men who are short*, but we still consider them men in the same way that tall men are.

"Trans people are predators with a fetish."

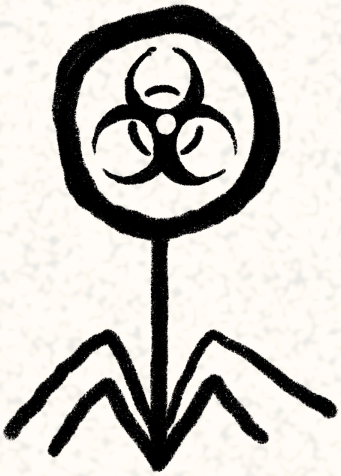


This strawman instead attacks *sexual predators rather than trans people*, unfairly using trans people as a proxy for their real issue: sexual predators. Why not test for sexual predators instead? Even assuming this is true (it blatantly isn't; cis people are more likely to be sexual predators), it still uses a proxy for a group rather than attacking the group in question.

"You can't just be whatever you identify as!"

This argument is made in a bunch of different ways, but for the most part sounds like "I identify as an attack helicopter". **No**, you cannot just be something because that's how you identify. You cannot be a cat, you cannot change your race (as this is dictated by one's family ties and not by stereotype), and you cannot become an attack helicopter. However, *what it means to be a man, a woman, or non-binary is more complicated*, because the boundaries between these identities are very nebulous. And where do intersex people fit in? Nowhere...?

Of course not. The only sensible, clear and direct way to determine someone's gender identity is to... **ask them!** Gender identity is self-selected because it is a description about one's internal reality, not an external claim. To determine gender any other way would not only be *harmful*, but also *unscientific*, since many people who would otherwise be considered men are disqualified as men and the same goes for women. Under a trans-inclusive definition of gender identity, **everyone is accounted for**.



"Transgenderism is a social contagion!"

Poor verbiage aside, this assumes that gender dysphoria (not a necessary precursor for transition) can be "contagious" when it's not. So-called "*rapid onset gender dysphoria*" as described can occur in cisgendered ways. For example, a cis woman might get breast implants to look more feminine upon deciding that hers are too small, this being a kind of **cisgender-gender affirmation**. In a world dominated by cisgender, heterosexual and patriarchal propaganda, *it's a wonder that any of us at all are trans!*

“...I’ll bet you don’t know what a woman is!”

This is what we like to call the “**Matt Walsh Definition Game**.” The answer is simple: a woman is an adult human female. Trans women are adults (as they are not girls), they are human, and they are self-identified as female. If you have an issue with self-identification, see previous point “You can’t just be whatever you identify as.”

As a socialist organization, the Monroe Left / MCC YDSA is and will forever be a safe space for Queer, LGBTQIA+ and otherwise marginalized gender/sex communities. Our advocacy being logically superior, we will always champion trans rights as a centerpiece of our mission.

TRANSPHOBES CAN GET LOST!

The Right to Death: Left to Suffer

by Jade (they/them)

TRIGGER WARNING

Discussion of suicide and depictions of death ahead!

LEFT.

A word used to describe something that has been abandoned, something forgotten. Take a look at the word **right**, as defined by Google as "*something that is true or correct, something that is morally good, justified or acceptable*." For being our supposed "correct" side, the right wing side of politics is **downright contradictory**. Those who subscribe to the so-called "right wing" may see themselves left behind in the court of *greed, cynicism, and self-preservation*. Those who choose to side with the **left wing** can be shown the **actual right of the world**, seeking to improve the wrong and spread the word of our goals. *Join me on this adventure* as I showcase one of those issues lesser known and discuss how we seek to resolve them.

Picture yourself in this scenario. You're an old person lying in a hospital bed, nearing your absolute end, in **utter pain and agony**. You wish the suffering would end. Your family beside you knows of the torment you are going through and asks the doctor to mercy kill you to end your suffering. However, **your doctor refuses**, stating that it wouldn't be morally right to kill another human, even if consensual. Instead, they offer you **life support** in an attempt to keep you alive as long as possible to increase your chances of living.

In spite of how nice this salvation may sound, *you already know that the pain is too much* for you to handle right now, and life support won't help to do anything to alleviate the pain, and you already know you likely won't make it out anyways. That is the kind of nonsense we currently have to deal with in this world. You see that hypothetical bed you'd be lying on right now? That bed is doing nothing but collecting dollars in an attempt to fix a problem that can't be solved. **Euthanasia is currently banned** in all of the United States, and for what reason? Hundreds of thousands of people die every day, and yet when we want to die on our own terms when we know it's the end of our life, we get told to *fuck off* and keep living out the misery? Spare me the bullshit. We allow our animals to be put down if they were in the same position in spite of the fact that most people would normally view animals as equally important as humans. Granted, we do have some acts or laws that are pro-euthanasia, such as the **Death with Dignity** act that has been brought up in the past, but many of these are either only state-specific, were only approved in the past, or are just *plainly ignored*.

Now yes, **euthanasia is technically illegal** across the U.S., but **assisted suicide is legal within several states**. As of June 2021, Oregon, Hawaii, Washington, Maine, Colorado, New Jersey, California, and Vermont are currently the only states that have assisted suicide fully legal. 8 states. Washington D.C. as well if you count that. Less than a fifth of the country is allowed assisted suicide. For the country we call the "Land of the Free," we sure don't have a lot of freedom with how we decide how our life goes. As if all of that isn't enough of a bane to deal with, this last fact might just seal the nail in the coffin (quite literally.) *The average cost of life support ranges from around $2000-$4000 a day, but can climb up to a staggering $10k a day if you're unlucky*. For humans, euthanasia is usually set at a price of around $3,500 in the few states it's legal in. **It is quite literally cheaper to end someone's life like that than to keep them alive**. So what purpose is there to outlaw euthanasia in nearly over 84% of states? Simple. *Milking you out of your money*.

The **right wing has gaslit themselves** into thinking that denying them the right to death is the morally correct option even though it clearly should not be. The left, on the other hand, favors that of choice. Armed with this, we aim to help make the world a better place.

MCC YDSA Logo Contest Submissions

On June 30, 2023, The MCC YDSA decided the winner of their logo contest, held from the 28th to the date of decision. Here are the most popular of the three artists' wonderful submissions!

WINNER:

"Big Boy"

by Chianti F.

(they/them)

"From the Ashes"

by Robin G.

(he/they)

“Goose Seal”
by Elizabeth Tackitt
(she/her)

“Prickly”
by Chianti F.
(they/them)

THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUITORS!

WRITERS:

Chianti F. (they/them)
Robin G. (he/they)
Elizabeth Tackitt (she/her)
Jade (they/them)

ARTISTS:

Chianti F. (they/them)
Robin G. (he/they)
Elizabeth Tackitt (she/her)

LEAD EDITOR:

Elizabeth Tackitt (she/her)

PLANNING & GRAPHICS:

Robin G. (he/they)
Elizabeth Tackitt (she/her)

Join our Discord to contribute to our second edition!

MONROE LEE

MONROE LEE

MONROE LEE

MONROE LEE

MONROE LEE